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ABSTRACT

The paper explores a behavioral paradox which occurs in everyday life: people try to make themselves different and stand out from others, but they also try to minimize their differences and be just like everyone else. The major hypothesis of the study states that people will work to individuate themselves when a positive event is forthcoming in the environment, but will work to deindividuate themselves in the face of an impending negative event. A second hypothesis, in which individuation is both the independent and the dependent variable, states that people who are already in a deindividuated state should have to work harder to make themselves stand out than people who already feel individuated, but should have to work less hard to make themselves anonymous. In contrast, people who are in an individual state should show the reverse pattern. The study also explores the hypothesis that males and females would use different techniques to call attention to themselves, as a result of previously learned sex roles. Subjects for the experiments were 80 university undergraduates; results are analyzed statistically while the ensuing discussion examines the outcomes of the study as they underscore the complexity of the individuation process. References are included. (Author/SES)

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SOCIAL AND PERSONAL BASES OF INDIVIDUATION

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Social and Personal Bases of Individuation[1]

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A woman living in a housing project reports that she feels safer because all the apartments look alike from the outside; there is nothing special to attract a burglar to her particular apartment. Men in basic military training quickly learn not to make themselves stand out from the rest of the platoon because if they do, they are more likely to be chosen for the most menial jobs. When a volunteer for an unpopular task is asked for from a group of school children, they will often slump down in their chairs, look away, or put their hands in front of their faces in an effort to melt into the crowd and not look different from the others. However, when one of them is going to be chosen for a special reward, they will yell, wave their arms, and jump up and down in order to draw attention to themselves. Similarly, contestants on such television shows as "The Dating Game" try very hard to make themselves appear unusual and unique, so that they will have a better chance of being chosen for a glamorous date. Many people use clothes to make themselves stand out from others and are sometimes upset if they find someone else wearing an outfit identical to theirs. On the other hand, such individuality in clothing usually occurs within the limits of the latest fashion trend, so that people wear what's "in" and not what's "out."

These and many other examples drawn from real life point up an intriguing behavioral paradox: people try to make themselves different and stand out from others, but they also try to minimize their differences and be just like everyone else. What are the reasons for engaging in such seemingly contradictory behaviors? When is one more likely to occur than the other? It was the goal of the present

research to begin to answer such questions by discovering some of the determinants of differentness.

Although little work has focused directly on the dual question of why people want to be different from others but also similar to them, there are several areas of theory and research that are concerned with either one or the other aspect of the problem.

Deviancy

Much work has been done on the concept of deviancy, which deals with behavior involving rule-breaking or societal disapproval, and thus views differentness as a negative characteristic. Merton's (1938) classic sociological theory states that conflicts or dissociations between culturally defined goals and institutionalized means produce "strains" in society which can then result in deviant behavior. This conceptualization rests on the assumption that there are certain behaviors which are intrinsically deviant (e.g. theft, murder). In contrast to this notion, recent theorists (e.g. Erikson, 1962; Kitsuse, 1962; Becker, 1963) have argued that deviancy is a relative quality which only exists in the eye of the beholder, rather than in the behavior.

Even when no rule-breaking at all is involved, a person's differentness can be a cue for deviance. Freedman & Doob (1968) found that a person who had received a very different score from the rest of the group on a vaguely-described "personality test" was more likely to be singled out as the target of aggression. In a study by Schachter (1951), a confederate who endorsed a different opinion than that of the group was given the poorest group jobs by the other subjects and was often rejected by them. People are also more likely to mistreat someone who is different from them in physical appearance, such as a person who is very different in height and weight, a person of a different race, a person who is deformed or disfigured, or someone who is stigmatized in some way (Goffman, 1963).

Conformity

If being different from others is a negative characteristic, then we would expect people to try to be more like others by concealing or minimizing their dissimilarity. This idea is clearly supported by the work of social psychologists on conformity. Both Festinger (1950) and Kelley (1952) have discussed the various pressures toward uniformity in groups which cause an individual member to conform to the group norms. The classic experiments of Asch (1951, 1956) have demonstrated that subjects will often agree with a unanimous (but clearly incorrect) majority rather than be the only one in the group who disagrees. However, when the subject is joined by someone who agrees with him, the amount of conformity drops sharply. In fact, a consistent minority can sometimes influence the majority (Moscovici, Lage, & Naffrechoux, 1969), probably because the minority opinion cannot then be regarded as an idiosyncrasy on the part of a single individual. Conformity is also greater when the subject's responses are public than when they are private or made anonymously (Deutsch & Gerard, 1955; Mouton, Blake, & Olmstead, 1956).

Identity

Much of the above literature on deviance and conformity rests on the underlying assumption that being different is a negative experience, for one reason or another. However, such an approach is only dealing with half of the problem, since it is clear that being different can also be positively valued. People will often change their appearance or behavior so that they will attract attention and stand out from the crowd. They will resist attempts by others to classify or categorize them because they then feel deprived of their individuality and special characteristics. The most obvious functional advantage of being different is that one can be more easily identified by other people in order to receive status, prestige, aid, love, etc. On a more conceptual level, being distinguishable from others is used as a way to establish a sense of identity, of a unique self-concept.

Several theorists (Fromm, 1941; Horney, 1937; Maslow, 1962) have taken the position that people have a need to completely realize and express their unique, individual self. Such a unique identity gives the person independence, but it can also make him isolated and anxious, and thus there is the risk that he may choose to conform to the expectations of others, rather than assert his differentness, in order to overcome this isolation. The developmental theory of Erikson (1959) conceives of identity as one of the components of the human life cycle which reaches fruition during adolescence. At this time, the person experiments with different roles and tries to find the place in society which is uniquely his or hers and which provides individual recognition. This theoretical work on man's need for a separate identity has been based on little empirical evidence other than clinical case studies. However, there has recently been some experimental research which is relevant to this proposition. Subjects who were made to feel highly similar to other people had a greater preference for experiences that were unavailable to others (Fromkin, 1970) and emphasized their uniqueness and gave more unusual answers on a creativity test (Fromkin, 1968). Also, Cooper & Jones (1969) found that subjects who were made to feel similar to an obnoxious person changed their opinions in order to show their distinctiveness from him.

Individuation

What is lacking in most of the above research is a coherent theory of the dynamics of differentness, which could explain why there are times when people want to be different from others and times when they want to be similar to them. One possible hypothesis is that the quality of the difference is the critical factor -- i.e. it is acceptable to be different on certain dimensions but not on others. An alternative notion is that the quantity of the difference is important, regardless of the dimension; being different is all right up to a point, but beyond that it is considered deviant and bad. While it seems intuitively obvious that people respond

to both the quality and quantity of someone's difference, these parameters are merely descriptive and thus do not provide an explanation for the phenomenon of differentness.

A more promising approach to the problem, which combines aspects of all the previously reviewed areas, is provided by theories of individuation and deindividuation (Ziller, 1964; Zimbardo, 1969). Individuation is generally conceptualized as a state in which the person feels differentiated, to a greater or lesser degree, from other people and objects. In contrast, deindividuation is a state in which the person feels indistinguishable, to a greater or lesser degree, from other people and objects. Such states can be produced by a variety of environmental conditions, both physical and social. For example, a person who is dressed exactly like everyone else in a group or whose face is not identifiable will feel relatively deindividuated. However, a person who is different in external appearance from other members of a group or who is verbally identified by name will tend to feel individuated. Both Ziller and Zimbardo have tried to spell out the personal advantages and disadvantages of these two states and thus the reasons why people want to achieve them at different times. A general principle, as stated by Ziller, is that "individuation is desirable within a supportive social environment, but anonymity is sought as a defense against a threatening environment" (p. 344).

The major hypothesis of this study, which was derived from these formulations, states that people will work to individuate themselves when a positive event is forthcoming in the environment, but will work to deindividuate themselves in the face of an impending negative event. In other words, people will try to make themselves different and stand out from the crowd in order to enhance their chances of receiving available positive rewards. However, they will try to melt into the crowd, becoming relatively anonymous, as the likelihood of punishment or other negative consequences increases. A second hypothesis, in which individuation is

both the independent and dependent variable, involves a person's prior level of experienced individuation. People who are already in a deindividuated state should have to work harder to make themselves stand out than people who already feel individuated, but should have to work less hard to make themselves anonymous. In contrast, people who are in an individuated state should show the reverse pattern. Finally, there was no reason to predict that these general principles about individuation would not hold true for both males and females. However, the study explored the hypothesis that the two sexes would use different techniques to call attention to themselves, as a result of previously learned sex-roles.

Method

Overview of design

Male and female subjects were run in groups of four in an experiment which was presumably concerned with group dynamics. After completing several preliminary activities, one of the subjects was to be chosen to be the designer in a city planning game. Half of the groups were told that the designer would win extra money (Positive Environment), while the others were told that the designer would receive electric shocks (Negative Environment). Within each group, two of the subjects were called by name, had personal comments made to them, had greater eye contact with the experimenter, and were in closer physical proximity to him (Individuation condition). The other two subjects were addressed more impersonally and were not in such close contact with the experimenter (Deindividuation condition). The subjects took several tests and participated in a group discussion, all of which were designed to allow them to make either unique or normative responses and thus either individuate or deindividuate themselves. With two levels of each of three independent variables (environment, individuation, and sex of subject), the basic design of this study was a 2 x 2 x 2 factorial. Ten subjects were run in each of

the eight cells of the design for a total of eighty subjects.

Subjects

Forty male and forty female undergraduates at Stanford University participated in the experiment, which was described as a study on group processes. Most of them were paid for their participation, while a few completed the experiment in order to satisfy a course experiment in introductory psychology. All subjects were contacted by telephone, and precautions were taken to assign them to a group where they were unacquainted with the other subjects.

Procedure

A group of four subjects was run in each session, with the sex of the group (either all male or all female) being randomly determined. After arriving at the experimental room, the subjects were greeted by Experimenter 1 and told that the study was concerned with different aspects of group behavior. In the first part of the study, group norms were to be obtained on personal associations and reactions, while in the second part, the subjects were going to engage in a group discussion.

Environment manipulation. In the third and last part of the study, the subjects were supposed to play a game of city planning, in which one person was to be the "designer," while the other three were to be "consultants." The designer was supposed to build a model city based on the informational cues provided by the consultants. Half of the groups (randomly assigned) were told that the designer would receive money for each trial where he correctly integrated the information provided him (Positive Environment condition). The other groups were told that the designer would receive an electric shock each time he or she made a mistake in utilizing the consultants' information (Negative Environment condition). After the procedure was described, each group saw one of four stimulus video tapes (with appropriate environment condition and sex) of "previous subjects" engaging in the city planning game. In addition to clearly showing the roles of the designer and

the consultants in the game, the tape emphasized the rewarding aspects of the Positive Environment condition (the designer smiled and joked about all the money he or she was winning) or the unpleasant ones of the Negative Environment condition (the designer was fairly grim-faced and visibly reacted to the shocks).

Experimenter 1 then explained to the subjects that one of them would be chosen to be the designer by Experimenter 2, who would be running the rest of the study. His decision would be based on the subject's performance on the association tests and in the group discussion. After answering any questions, Experimenter 1 brought in Experimenter 2 from an adjoining room.

Individuation manipulation. Experimenter 2 first indicated that some background information about the subjects was needed before the study began. He randomly picked two subjects and interviewed each of them separately for a few minutes, asking such questions as their name, home, special interests or hobbies, favorite music, astrological sign, etc. Experimenter 1 did the same thing with the other two subjects. After completing his interviews, Experimenter 1 left the room (supposedly to work with some other subjects down the hall), and the next two parts of the study were conducted by Experimenter 2.

Throughout the following test and discussion periods, Experimenter 2 addressed the two subjects he had interviewed by name and made occasional references to the answers they had given him (e.g. "what does our chess player think of this item?"). These subjects were in the Individuation condition. The other two subjects were addressed in more impersonal terms (e.g. "you over there") and not by name, and no comment included a reference to any personal information since Experimenter 2 had not interviewed them. These subjects were in the Deindividuation condition. The first subjects to be called on to give public answers in the pattern association test were always the Individuated subjects, and they also were always asked to be the first to give self-presentations for the discussion. In addition, Experimenter 2

used some nonverbal individuation techniques. During the testing session he always had the Individuated subjects sit in the two cubicles nearest to where he was standing, so that he was physically closer to them and could engage in more eye contact. In the discussion he again arranged it so that he was always sitting next to the two Individuated subjects.

In terms of experimental control, the use of two experimenters instead of one meant that each of them was "blind" to one of the experimental variables. Experimenter 2 was "blind" to the Environment condition, while Experimenter 1 was unaware that the interviews were part of an experimental manipulation and thus was "blind" to the Individuation variable.

Testing period. For the next part of the study, the subjects were seated in individual cubicles. Experimenter 2 briefly summarized the different parts of the study and reminded the subjects that he would be choosing one of them to be the designer on the basis of their performance in the rest of the experiment. He then proceeded to administer several different tests. Two of the tests provided the subject with a choice of behaviors which clearly ranged from very normative to very unique. The first test, which involved pattern associations, asked subjects to choose between several alternative responses. Some of the test items included group norms, while the others did not. Also borrowed from conformity research was the technique of having subjects give both public and private responses. The other test, which required subjects to think of word associations, measured the uniqueness of the subject's answers and is thus similar to the procedure used by Fromkin (1968).

The first test was the pattern association test in which the stimuli were projected onto a screen. Each stimulus slide had a nonsense syllable (e.g. KAF) and four designs or patterns. Subjects were asked to indicate which pattern they thought was best associated with the sound of the nonsense syllable. Because of the subjective nature of the test, they were assured that there were no "right" or

"wrong" answers. The first twelve slides had percentage norms (fictitious) listed next to each of the four patterns, while the second twelve slides had no such norms. These norms were described as "norms obtained in previous studies" and were always arranged so that the biggest percentage norm was next to the top pattern and the smallest one next to the bottom one.

The subjects were told that they would be rating the series of twenty-four slides twice. The initial ratings would be "first impressions" based on quick, snap judgments since each slide would be shown only briefly. For the second set of ratings, the subjects could view each slide for a longer time and give a more reasoned and thoughtful judgment. Consistency between the first and second ratings was described as being unimportant. For the first, "snap judgment" ratings, each slide was shown for ten seconds and the subject responded privately by marking his or her preferences on an answer sheet. The second ratings were publicly stated by each subject in turn. The order in which the four subjects gave their answers was varied on each trial, so that each subject was first on six trials, second on six trials, etc.

When the ratings had been completed, Experimenter 2 administered the word association test, which consisted of twenty-five items. He first presented a stimulus word and then gave the subjects a few seconds to think of an associated word. A slide was then projected on the screen which gave five possible associations, ranging from the most common association (as determined by the Russell & Jenkins word norms, 1954) to a fairly uncommon one. Next to each word was a percentage indicating the proportion of all subjects who had picked it as an association to the stimulus. In addition to the five words, a sixth alternative was the word "other" followed by a blank line. Subjects were asked to mark on their answer sheets the association they had thought of. If the word was not listed on the slide, they were asked to check "other" and write it in the blank.

The final test was the Social Desirability scale (Crowne & Marlowe, 1964) which is designed to measure the subject's desire to win the approval of others and thus his tendency to conform. While the subjects were taking this test, Experimenter 2 leafed through their previous answer sheets, as though looking at the responses they had given, and pretended to write comments and scores on them.

Discussion period. As suggested by some of the real-life examples described at the beginning of this article, people often use verbal and nonverbal expressive behaviors in order to make themselves stand out or be anonymous. Therefore, in addition to the structured verbal tests, subjects in the present study were given an opportunity to use expressive behaviors to individuate or deindividuate themselves during a relatively unstructured group discussion.

After completing the previous tests, the subjects came out of the cubicles and sat around a table in the center of the room. Experimenter 2 first asked each subject in turn to give a one minute description of him or herself. He then went around the table a second time, asking each subject to describe their future goal in life. The ostensible purpose of these presentations was to provide the group members with information on which they could base a discussion. Experimenter 2 then asked the subjects to engage in a discussion for about ten minutes while he made observations. Both the presentations and the discussion of each group were recorded on video tape for subsequent analysis. In addition, there were two observers behind a one-way glass who rated the subjects' verbal and nonverbal behavior on standardized check lists.

At the end of the discussion, Experimenter 2 flipped through his notes and the previous answer sheets, looked around at the subjects, and then wrote down the name of one of them on a card. He then asked them to fill out a questionnaire which contained personal ratings and manipulation checks. After completing the questionnaires, the subjects were taken to another room for the city planning game.

where Experimenter 3 (the author) was given the card with the name of the subject chosen to be the designer. Before starting the game, the subjects rated the performance of Experimenter 2 on another questionnaire (ostensibly a procedural requirement for all social psychology studies) which contained additional checks on the Individuation manipulation.

Since it was only the expectation of a positive or negative game that was crucial to the study, it was not really necessary to have the subjects actually play the game. However, by having them do so, it was possible to postpone the debriefing until after the study had been completed. Because of the nature of the experiment, it was critical that word not get around to future subjects of the different manipulations. The game itself was a fairly complex one, in which the designer tried to figure out the rules of building an "ideal" city on the basis of the different types of information that the consultants chose to relay to him or her. Depending on the experimental condition, the designers either received small amounts of money or mild electric shocks for their decisions. All of the subjects became quite involved in the game and indicated that it was very interesting to play. At the end of the game, Experimenter 3 paid the subjects, thanked them for their participation, and assured them that they would receive a full description of the study when all the data had been collected. A summary of the hypotheses, procedure, and preliminary results was later mailed to each subject.

Results[3]

Validation of experimental manipulations

The purpose of the Environment manipulation was to create different expectations about the pleasantness and desirability of the designer's job in the city planning game. It consisted of a description of the game by Experimenter 1 and the appropriate one of four video tapes of a group playing the game. These tapes were

independently rated by two judges as to how fun and pleasant the game appeared to be, how happy and satisfied the designer was, etc. The judges' ratings, which were highly correlated (r = +.96), were extremely positive for the two Positive Environment tapes and extremely negative for the Negative Environment tapes, with no overlap between the positive and negative ratings. The only exception to this pattern was that the judges always rated the game as very interesting, regardless of the Environment manipulation. There were no differences between the ratings for the male and female tapes. The subjects' perception of the city planning game was measured by several scale items included in the first post-experimental questionnaire. While all subjects viewed the game as an interesting one, subjects in the Positive Environment condition thought that the game was much more fun and easy than did subjects in the Negative Environment condition (F = 9.80, df = 1/71, p < .005).

The Individuation manipulation was designed to produce differences in how much subjects felt they stood out from the rest of the group. It consisted of verbal and nonverbal techniques used by Experimenter 2. The primary check on this manipulation was a questionnaire item asking subjects to indicate the subjective probability that they had been picked as the designer. Individuated subjects felt they were more likely to have been picked than did Deindividuated subjects (F = 4.18, df = 1/69, p < .05). The manipulation effectiveness was also assessed by having the subjects rate Experimenter 2 on a number of dimensions. All of the subjects rated him as being very friendly, relaxed, and competent with no differences between experimental conditions. However, when asked if Experimenter 2 was someone they would like to know better, Individuated subjects gave a much more positive response than Deindividuated subjects (F = 7.22, df = 1/72, p < .01). Individuated subjects were also more favorable towards being in another study with Experimenter 2 (F = 4.53, df = 1/72, p < .05). Subjects were also asked to state their overall reaction to Experimenter 2, and these free responses were scored by two judges

(inter-judge reliability, $r = +.91$) for references to how personal or impersonal Experimenter 2 had been. The results show that Deindividuated subjects felt he had been more impersonal than did Individuated subjects ($F = 8.17$, $df = 1/68$, $p < .01$).

Finally, it was critical to the design of the present study that the subjects clearly perceive a connection between their test and discussion behavior and the selection of one of them as the designer. At the end of the study, subjects were asked to state what they thought were the reasons for the selection that was made. Virtually all of the subjects indicated that their test answers and discussion participation were the basis for the experimenter's decision.

Test of hypotheses

Factor analysis. Of the many measures that were used in the study, thirty-three were judged to be the most important, either because they were the major dependent variables or because they showed substantial differences between experimental conditions. These measures included test scores, manipulation checks, subjective ratings, timing scores, and a variety of verbal and nonverbal expressive behaviors. In addition to analyses of variance and the computation of correlations between these measures, a factor analysis was performed to determine if there were any underlying source variables which could account for the observed interrelations in the data. The analysis used principal factoring with iteration and an orthogonal rotation.

The analysis extracted thirteen rotated factors, of which four accounted for over half of the variance. Two of these factors involved different patterns of individuation (see Fig. 1). The first individuation factor (Individuation - Singular)

Insert Fig. 1 about here

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is composed of individuating behavior in the discussion, in the self-description, and

on the tests. All of these behaviors were attempts to make oneself singular (i.e. different from the others in the group). High positive factor loadings were found for: amount of time spent talking in the discussion (.88), average length of comments (.66), amount of verbal attention-getting behavior (.70), and unusual self-descriptions (.25). A negative loading was obtained for the amount of conformity on the pattern association test (-.32). Subjects who scored high on this factor made long comments which drew attention to themselves, and did not conform to the responses of other subjects.

The other individuation factor (Individuation - Personal) is based on behavior in which the subject made personal revelations about him or herself, rather than trying to behave in a unique way. The three variables with high factor loadings were: length of self-description (.99), unusualness of self-description (.37), and number of arm gestures during self-description (.70). The overall pattern is one of a long, unusual, and expressive portrayal of oneself to the rest of the group. This method of individuating oneself by making public one's unique identity is quite different from that of the Individuation - Singular factor, which emphasizes one's behavioral singularity in a particular situation. Subjects who wanted to individuate themselves may have used either one of the two strategies, or both.

The other two factors involved different types of emotional response (see Fig. 2). The first emotion factor (Emotion - Agitated) is composed of active or

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Insert Fig. 2 about here

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agitated emotional behavior which occurred in the discussion. The variables with high positive loadings on this factor were: number of jokes (.74), number of smiles (.70), number of interruptions (.61), number of comments (.67), and amount of verbal attention-getting behavior (.42). In addition, two variables had negative

factor loadings: average length of comments (-.49) and time spent describing oneself to the group (-.24). The overall pattern is one of many short comments and attempts to be active in the discussion, but little effort to publicly present oneself to the group.

A positive and relaxing discussion experience is the basis of the other emotion factor (Emotion - Contented). High positive loadings were obtained for: the subject's ratings of how relaxed he or she felt during the discussion (.74) and how enjoyable it was (.61), how positively the subject felt about the city planning game (.45), Social Desirability score (.33), and number of arm gestures while silent during the discussion (.25). The resulting pattern is one of positive feelings about the experiment, an endorsement of socially acceptable behavior, and a greater use of nonverbal expressiveness while silent. In contrast to the Emotion - Agitated factor, which is comprised primarily of verbal measures, the Emotion - Contented factor is based largely on subjective ratings and shows no distinctive pattern of verbal behavior.

Several important points become apparent from this factor analysis. First, most of the subjects' behavior can generally be categorized as either emotional or individuating. There were two methods of individuating oneself and two patterns of emotional behavior, all of which were uncorrelated. Second, individuating behavior occurred almost entirely during the self-description and the group discussion. The formal tests appeared to have little importance as means of individuation. As a result, behavior occurring during the discussion period becomes the most critical for testing the hypotheses.

Environment hypothesis. The major hypothesis, that Positive Environment subjects would try to individuate themselves more than Negative Environment subjects, received a good deal of empirical support. In terms of the factor analysis, Negative Environment subjects scored high on the Emotion - Agitated factor, while

Positive Environment subjects were high on the Emotion - Contented and the Individuation - Singular factors. This overall pattern is strongly borne out by the analyses of the individual measures. Positive Environment subjects gave more unusual self-descriptions ($F = 4.72$, $df = 1/72$, $p < .05$), which were accompanied by more expressive arm gestures ($F = 5.46$, $df = 1/66$, $p < .025$), than did Negative Environment subjects. Positive Environment females also talked about themselves significantly longer than Negative Environment females ($F = 4.63$, $df = 1/33$, $p < .05$). While presenting their self-descriptions, Positive Environment subjects looked more often at Experimenter 2 than did Negative Environment subjects, especially when they were in the Deindividuated condition ($F = 4.31$, $df = 1/66$, $p < .05$).

During the discussion itself, Negative Environment subjects exhibited a more active pattern of behavior. They made a greater number of comments ($F = 6.79$, $df = 1/72$, $p < .025$), but these were much shorter in length than those of the Positive Environment subjects ($F = 7.72$, $df = 1/72$, $p < .01$). Negative Environment subjects also told more jokes ($F = 7.28$, $df = 1/72$, $p < .01$) and smiled more often ($F = 9.98$, $df = 1/72$, $p < .005$), as shown in Fig. 3. All of these results were

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Insert Fig. 3 about here

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particularly pronounced in the Negative Individuated condition, where the scores were always significantly different ($p < .01$) from the other conditions.[4] However, there was a strong tendency for Negative Environment subjects in the Individuated condition to rate the discussion as less enjoyable than Deindividuated subjects ($F = 3.98$, $df = 1/71$, $p < .10$).

Subjects' responses on the association tests revealed a tendency for Positive Environment subjects to give more unusual answers than Negative Environment ones ($F = 3.67$, $df = 1/71$, $p < .10$). When the pattern test items included norms, Negative Environment subjects were more likely to conform to the first response

given by the other subjects (t = 2.41, df = 39, $p < .05$) than when no norms were provided.[5] Again, the Negative Individuated condition was particularly distinctive in its test scores. While most subjects gave less unusual answers for test items with norms than for items without them (t = 7.25, df = 78, $p < .001$), Negative Individuated subjects gave normative answers thoughout the entire test. The difference score for this condition is significantly smaller than those of the other cells (t = 2.58, df = 77, $p < .02$). When later asked to judge how unusual or average their test responses had been, Negative Environment subjects rated them as more unusual in the Deindividuated condition than in the Individuated one, while Positive Environment subjects showed a slight reverse trend (F = 4.25, df = 1/72, $p < .05$). Negative Individuated subjects rated their answers as least unusual and were significantly different from the other conditions (t = 2.27, df = 78, $p < .05$).

A correlational analysis of the discussion measures revealed a very interesting pattern of behavior. Subjects who made many comments made shorter ones (r = -.41, $p < .001$),[6] and were more likely to joke (r = +.42, $p < .001$), to interrupt (r = +.45, $p < .001$), and to smile (r = +.42, $p < .001$). They also thought that the chances were greater that they would be selected as designer (r = +.31, $p < .007$). This pattern was more characteristic of Negative Environment subjects, especially those in the Negative Individuated condition. In general, this pattern appears to be somewhat defensive, since these subjects were behaving quite gaily but reported that they did not enjoy the discussion very much. Anticipating the likelihood of experiencing electric shocks, they probably tried to overcome or disguise their fear by generally behaving in an exuberant way. Paradoxically, such boisterous behavior as joking, interrupting, smiling, etc. calls attention to oneself, although this is the very outcome that these subjects want to avoid. In some sense, it appears that the subject's emotional arousal is interfering with a more rational coping strategy in this threatening situation.

In contrast to the above pattern, subjects who made fewer, but longer comments in the discussion talked more overall (r = +.58, p < .001), but were less likely to smile (r = -.36, p < .001) or to interrupt (r = -.27, p < .02). This pattern was more characteristic of Positive Environment subjects, who also showed a strong correlation between how identifiable they felt and how personally revealing their comments had been (r = +.54, p < .001). Positive Environment subjects who looked often at Experimenter 2 while describing themselves gave more unusual self-descriptions (r = +.33, p < .04), gave more unusual test answers (r = +.60, p < .001), and were less likely to have conformed to the other subjects' responses (r = -.34, p < .05). However, Negative Environment subjects who glanced at the experimenter conformed more often (r = +.40, p < .01), gave less unusual test answers (r = -.31, p < .06), and talked less in the discussion (r = -.35, p < .03).

The confirmation for the Environment hypothesis is quite evident throughout the study, and particularly during the group discussion. Since the Environment manipulation was not as strong as its real-life counterparts (for ethical and practical reasons), these findings are especially impressive. Clearly, the positive experience of winning a small amount of money does not have the same impact on a person as being chosen for promotion or winning a contest. Similarly, the possibility of receiving mild shock is not as threatening as the experience of being singled out for public ridicule or a dangerous job. However, in the present study the Negative Environment clearly had a stronger effect on a wide range of behaviors than the Positive one, particularly for females.

Individuation hypothesis. The secondary hypothesis was that Deindividuated subjects would engage in more individuating behaviors than Individuated subjects. The data provide support for this prediction, particularly in the Negative Environment condition. In general, Individuated subjects were higher on the Emotion - Agitated factor than Deindividuated subjects, while the latter were high on the Individuation -

Singular factor.

Deindividuated subjects looked more often at Experimenter 2 while describing themselves and their future goals ($F = 10.20$, $df = 1/72$, $p < .005$), while Individuated subjects were more likely to look away from the other people ($F = 7.08$, $df = 1/72$, $p < .01$). Individuated subjects talked for a greater amount of time in the discussion than did Deindividuated subjects ($F = 5.28$, $df = 1/72$, $p < .025$), smiled more often ($F = 7.41$, $df = 1/72$, $p < .01$), and engaged in more behavior that drew attention to themselves ($F = 7.80$, $df = 1/64$, $p < .01$), but reported feeling more nervous ($F = 5.07$, $df = 1/71$, $p < .05$).

During the association tests, Deindividuated subjects exhibited a different pattern of behavior than Individuated subjects when their test responses were made publicly. When they were the first person to call out their answer, Deindividuated subjects tended to give more unusual responses ($F = 3.90$, $df = 1/71$, $p < .10$). This effect was particularly characteristic of males ($F = 5.91$, $df = 1/35$, $p < .025$). Furthermore, Deindividuated subjects were less responsive to the norms listed with the test items ($F = 6.54$, $df = 1/71$, $p < .025$). In other words, when the test items included norms, Individuated subjects gave much less unusual public answers than when no norms were involved ($t = 4.15$, $df = 38$, $p < .001$). In contrast, Deindividuated subjects showed no such differences ($t = .83$, ns). As mentioned previously, Individuated subjects in the Negative Environment condition were always especially distinctive in both their discussion and test behavior.

The correlational analysis showed a consistent pattern of individuating behavior for the Deindividuated condition. These subjects who gave unusual descriptions of themselves and their future goals made more comments in the discussion ($r = +.42$, $p < .006$), talked longer ($r = +.36$, $p < .02$), interrupted more often ($r = +.42$, $p < .006$), and engaged in more attention-getting behavior ($r = +.39$, $p < .02$). The more often Deindividuated subjects looked at Experimenter 2, the more

they said about themselves (r = +.56, p < .001). Also, the longer their comments in the discussion, the more personally revealing they felt they had been (r = +.32, p < .05). Not only did Deindividuated subjects feel more relaxed in the discussion than did Individuated subjects, but their relaxation was strongly correlated with how positively they felt about the city planning game (r = +.54, p < .001). An interesting difference between Individuated and Deindividuated subjects appeared in their use of the nonverbal behavior of smiling. Deindividuated subjects who smiled felt more positively about the city planning game (r = +.31, p < .06) and tended to conform less often on the tests (r = -.26, p < .10). In contrast, Individuated subjects who smiled tended to view the game more negatively (r = -.26, p < .10) and conformed more often on the tests (r = +.30, p < .07).

The greater support for this hypothesis in the Negative than in the Positive Environment condition is apparently due to the stronger impact of the Negative manipulation. Negative Individuated subjects felt they were more likely to receive shocks than Deindividuated subjects and were sufficiently motivated by this threat to play down their distinctiveness and try to "melt into the crowd." In contrast, the opportunity to get a little money was apparently a weaker incentive and thus produced less dramatic differences between the two Individuation conditions.

The behavioral differences that were obtained between the Individuated and Deindividuated conditions are especially impressive, since this was a within-group manipulation which was rather subtle in its operationalization. It was also a relatively continuous one, since there were several points throughout the study where the experimenter responded to each subject in either an individuating or deindividuating way. While this procedure had the effect of strengthening the impact of the manipulation, it may also have had an adverse effect on the subjects' own attempts at individuation. Since the experimenter's behavior served as feedback to the subjects on their degree of distinctiveness, those subjects who were trying

to change their status may have been discouraged by his apparent failure to perceive these changes and simply resigned themselves to their position.

Sex differences. There was no a priori reason to expect any differences between males and females for the two main hypotheses. It was assumed that both sexes would want to individuate themselves more in the Positive than in the Negative Environment condition, and would engage in more individuating behaviors when they were Deindividuated than when they were Individuated. By and large, this null hypothesis was supported by the data. On several of the major dependent measures, males and females responded similarly. However, throughout the study, females showed a more consistent pattern of behavior than did males. Females who attempted to individuate themselves were high on both the Individuation - Personal and the Individuation - Singular factors, and the intercorrelations between the major variables for these two factors were quite strong. For example, females who spent a lot of time in describing themselves were less likely to smile ($r = -.52$, $p < .001$) or to joke ($r = -.34$, $p < .04$) during the discussion. Smiling behavior was also negatively correlated with looking at Experimenter 2 ($r = -.42$, $p < .008$) and using expressive arm gestures while talking ($r = -.40$, $p < .01$). Females who talked more about themselves made fewer comments ($r = -.51$, $p < .001$), although these were much longer in average length ($r = +.50$, $p < .001$). Females' more unusual self-descriptions were accompanied by more expressive arm gestures ($r = +.54$, $p < .001$) and were correlated with more unusual test responses ($r = +.34$, $p < .03$). In contrast to the females, males showed neither a consistent nor an easily comprehensible pattern of individuating behavior, since there were fewer significant intercorrelations which did not seem to cluster together in any meaningful way.

In addition, there were some differences between the sexes which appear to reflect more general sex-role behavior in everyday life. One such difference was that males were more likely to want to be the designer in the city planning

game ($F = 8.36$, $df = 1/71$, $p < .01$), while females were more likely to prefer one of the consultants' positions ($F = 4.23$, $df = 1/71$, $p < .05$). In other words, males wanted to take the more active and aggressive leadership role in the game, but females opted for the passive and undemanding "follower" roles. Such a difference is probably the result of society's sex-role indoctrination, in which males are taught to be more active and powerful, and females are supposed to display more passive and helpless "feminine" behavior. In addition to preferring the designer's role, males did not view the Negative game with as much fear or dislike as females. In fact, some males thought this game was more interesting than the Positive one, perhaps because the electric shocks provided a challenge or a test of ability, toughness, or "machismo." As a result, these males made some attempts to individuate themselves more in the Negative than in the Positive Environment condition. Such behavior, when it occurred, was opposite to that of the females, and is a partial explanation for the less consistent treatment differences for males.

The other major difference between male and female subjects was their expressive behavior. Throughout the experiment, females smiled more often than males ($F = 10.20$, $df = 1/66$, $p < .005$), but made many fewer arm gestures while they were silent and listening to the other subjects ($F = 14.27$, $df = 1/72$, $p < .001$). One possible reason for these differences is that females in our society are expected to be more sociable, friendly, and aware of proper etiquette than are males. Thus, in their interaction with three other strangers, females would be more likely to smile and appear friendly, but would be less likely to "fiddle around" with their hands (except for expressive purposes).

Discussion

One of the major outcomes of the present study is that it has underscored the complexity of the individuation process. A particularly critical problem is

the way in which the process is put into operation. If a person decides that he wants to make himself stand out, how does he go about doing it? Since being different obviously necessitates the use of a reference group, the first step is to evaluate the other people in the particular situation and determine the dimensions on which one could differ from them. For example, a person could disagree with a position taken by the others, could dress differently from them, could disrupt some ongoing activity, could react with more extreme emotion, etc. Once the person has decided on some individuating behavior and has performed it, he should stand out, to a greater or lesser degree, from the others.

However, this rather simple tactic for individuating oneself is not always immediately successful. Unless the chosen behavior is really deviant or outrageous, it is quite possible that others will follow the person's example and engage in the same behavior, thus erasing his differentness from them. This process is well illustrated in the emergence, spread, and rapid discarding of fads. Fashion leaders introduce new styles (e.g. clothing, music, dance patterns), and after they are widely adopted, the innovators discard them in attempts to further differentiate themselves from the adaptors. The fad dies through replacement, and the process is again repeated.

Since people have been shown to be sensitive to situational norms and constraints, it is quite likely (and somewhat paradoxical) that their individuating behavior will be of a "reasonable" and "normal" type. This norm of appropriateness was very evident in this study, where subjects behaved quite properly and rarely deviated from the experimental instructions. If one's individuation attempts are circumscribed by situational norms, it becomes even more difficult to find a differentiating tactic which will not be adopted by others. This raises the issue of distinguishing between the motivation to be individuated, the perception of the basis of how to do so, and the ability to accomplish this goal behaviorally. An

individual may sincerely wish to appear as different from others, but to the extent that he feels his alternatives are limited, he may be frustrated in his attempts to do so.

Social feedback is a critical part of the individuation process, since it is the only way by which the person can assess if his attempts to be different have been recognized by others. A person is individuated only if someone else shows his awareness of the changes in the person's behavior. If no such awareness occurs, then the person feels very deindividuated, in spite of his efforts to the contrary. The results of other studies can perhaps be better understood in terms of this interpretation. For example, Aronson's (1969) studies of liking have shown that people react most strongly to evaluations of themselves which change over time, as opposed to evaluations which remain constantly negative or positive. This finding may be due to the fact that the person feels individuated and unique when the evaluation changes (presumably as a function of his own behavior), but feels deindividuated, anonymous, or unimportant if it remains constant, since this indicates that the evaluator had not really noticed him.

In the present study, the subjects were very sensitive to the feedback provided by the experimenter, since it was his decision that was critical to them. Although he behaved in a standardized way with all subjects, the experimenter apparently gave off some subtle types of cues, since the subjects who were actually chosen as the designer seemed to be aware of their higher visibility prior to the announcement of their selection. The basic question here is what are the verbal and nonverbal cues that tell someone he is individuated? Aside from any obvious physical differences, how does a person "know" that he stands out from others? Since Experimenter 2 did not actually tell the subjects whom he was going to pick, they probably gleaned this information from various nonverbal behaviors, such as how long or how often he looked at them, how often he smiled or responded in some

way to their remarks, etc. Research which varied the quantity or quality of these types of behaviors might be able to determine the matrix of feedback cues which are most critical in a given situation.

Up to this point, our discussion of individuation has been using the time perspective of a single situation. However, the process of being different can also operate across a series of situations, as when a person tries to behave consistently in a unique way no matter what he's doing. Such individuation over time is what we commonly refer to as "identity" or "style." Although both individuation and identity focus on a person's differentness, their point of reference is not always directed toward some outside judge -- i.e. "am I behaving in such a way that some person will notice me and single me out from the others?" Rather, the identity process seems to be more directed toward the individual himself. That is, it is the individual, as self-monitor and evaluator, who is best qualified to observe his behavior over time and across situations and to judge whether or not he is a unique human being, who is somehow different from all other people.

If identity can be conceived of as a state of chronic individuation, then perhaps being treated anonymously over time could result in the development of a sense of chronic deindividuation. For such individuals, social recognition may become so important that they are willing to engage in counter-normative, anti-social behaviors in an effort to gain attention, notoriety, and singularity. The class clown, for example, behaves in ways which are guaranteed to get him in trouble, but which are also certain to be noticed by his peers, teacher, and the authorities. The biographies of some presidential assassins also seem to reveal a similar motivation.

Throughout the present study, the concern has been with how and why the single individual tries to be different from others. However, there are also collective attempts at individuation, in which people became members of a group

that behaves very differently from the rest of society. By being part of a group that is singled out by others, the individual receives some sort of personal identity or sense of uniqueness (Klapp, 1969). Examples of such groups include school cheerleaders, the Hell's Angels, Jesus freaks, etc. This collective individuation often uses tactics that are similar to attempts at singularity (e.g. dressing differently, holding different opinions), but it is not merely a multiplication of the latter. In collective individuation, the individual group member must first become very similar to some people in order to become very different from others, while such sameness is not a necessary prerequisite for singularity. Interesting questions raised by the collective phenomenon are how much group members want to be individuated within the group, and the extent to which such individuation could occur before the person risked the loss of the collective identity.

The present study of individuation has several major implications for further work in this area. In this experiment, which was an initial test of Ziller's (1964) principle, the hypothesis was operationalized by varying an outcome that was external to the subject (i.e. money or electric shocks). However, it would be misleading to assume that this hypothesis only applied to human behavior that is controlled by external consequences. People often change their behavior as a function of chronic, internal, self-evaluative processes, such as pride or shame, and one would expect that the general hypothesis would also apply in such instances. For example, a person who anticipates feeling embarrassed or ashamed should try to deindividuate himself in order to minimize the chance of this experience occurring. The effect of these internal consequences may even be more powerful than external outcomes, so that it is possible that a person will risk external punishments (or forego external rewards) because of the greater benefits to his self-evaluation. It is not difficult to find principled people who differentiate themselves from the

crowd and take unpopular stands, knowing full well that it will bring them external punishments, because to not do so would result in more severe self-punishment. Future research on individuation should attempt to vary such internal consequences and determine if the Environment hypothesis is just as applicable to internal, as to external, outcomes.

The difference between males and females in their desire to be the designer is an important finding which should be explored in future experiments. If the difference is a result of sex-role indoctrination, as suggested earlier, then we would expect the pattern of choices to be even more extreme in a study which used mixed-sex groups, rather than same-sex ones. Presumably, the presence of the opposite sex would emphasize and strengthen the tendency for subjects to behave in the sexually "appropriate" way.

The study of expressive behavior in this research was largely exploratory, since it was not clear, either intuitively or on the basis of previous work, which verbal and nonverbal behaviors were most critical to expressive communication. Because of this relative ignorance, it would have been premature to decide <u>a priori</u> that a particular behavior was the important one and then measure only it and no other. The results of any one measure by itself could be very misleading, since a single behavior can serve several different functions. As an illustration of this point, measures of smiling behavior alone would have led to distorted conclusions, since Individuated subjects smiled when they were feeling negative, while Deindividuated subjects smiled when they were feeling positive. Until such time as the dynamics of expressive behavior are better understood, the use of such tools as factor analysis will be of crucial importance, both in identifying the most critical variables and in determining the underlying patterns of expressiveness. What we communicate with our hands, our eyes, our face, and our voice appears to be the most important part of the individuation process, and should therefore be the major focus of future

research on this problem.

In conclusion, we might use the findings of this study to recast Shakespeare's familiar statement -- all the world is a stage on which man either attempts to be part of the chorus or the protagonist; melodramas and tragedies draw most men back, while comedies and romances encourage us to step out into the spotlight.

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Footnotes

[1]This paper is based on the author's doctoral dissertation, which was submitted to the Psychology Department at Stanford University. The research was supported by ONR Contract N000 14-67-A-0112-0041 to Philip Zimbardo and by NIMH training grant 12283 in social psychology. I wish to thank Philip Zimbardo, Albert Bandura, and Daryl Bem for their very valuable criticism and encouragement as the members of my thesis committee. I am also grateful to Burke Robinson, Don Nanney, Carolyn Burkhart, and Jane Fink for their excellent work in conducting the experiment.

[2]Requests for reprints should be sent to the author, Department of Psychology, University of California, Berkeley, California 94720.

[3]Because of the amount and complexity of the data generated by the seventy-five measures in this study, only the major results will be presented here. However, a complete presentation of the means and statistical analyses is contained in the author's doctoral dissertation (available through University Microfilms).

[4]All reported comparisons between individual cell means are made by Duncan's New Multiple-Range Test.

[5]All reported *t*-tests are two-tailed.

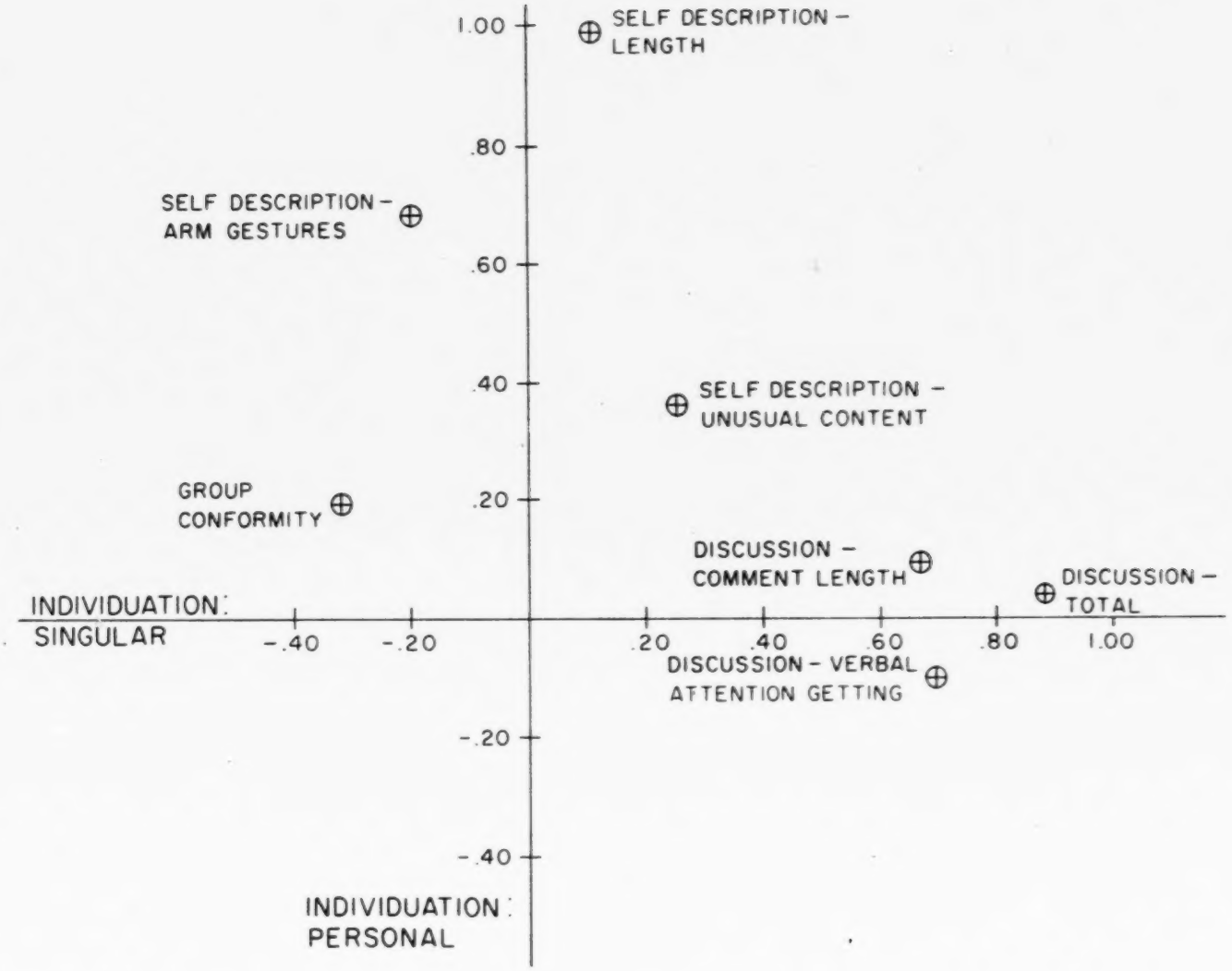
[6]Correlations for the entire sample have N = 80, while correlations for any one of the experimental conditions have N = 40.

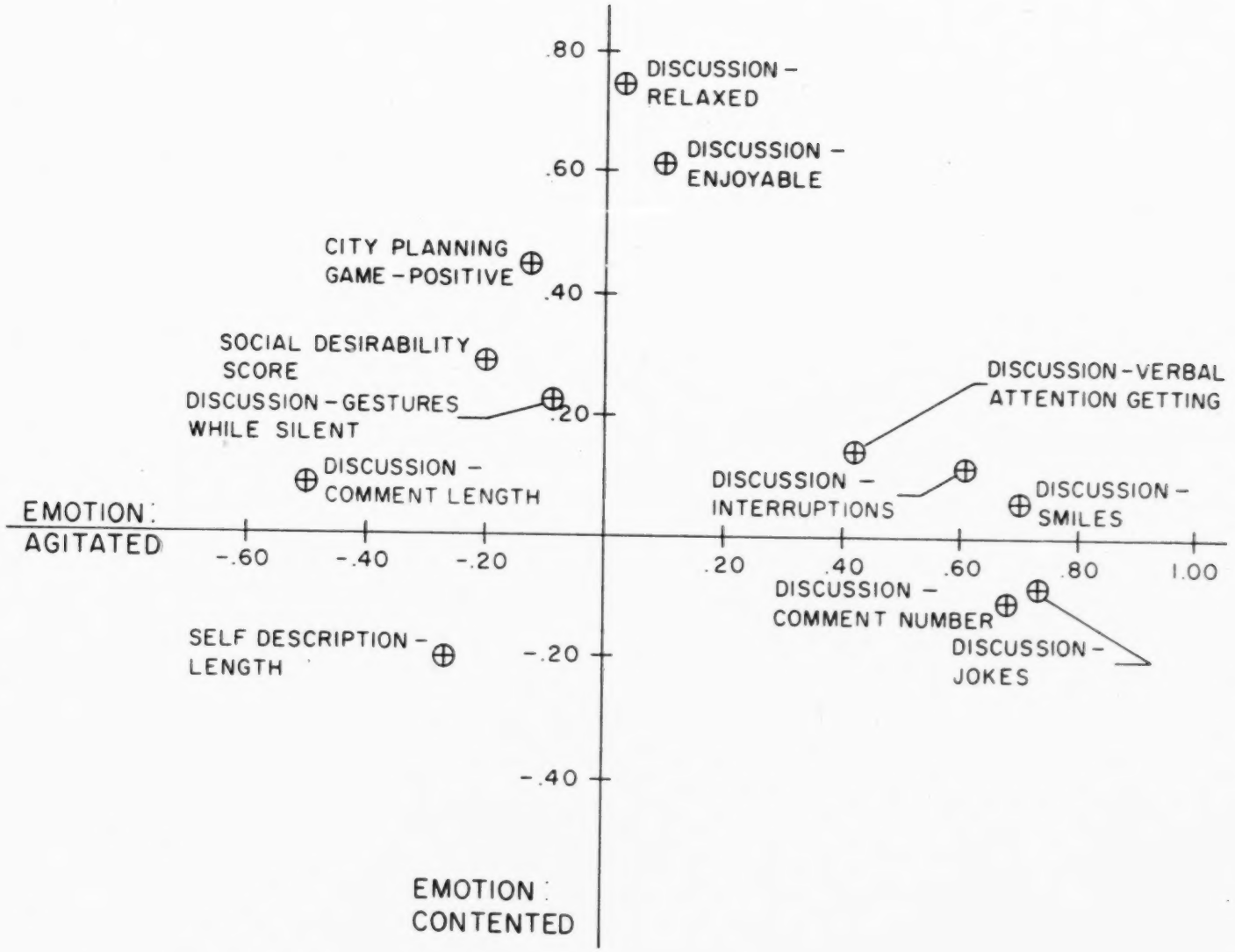
Figure Captions

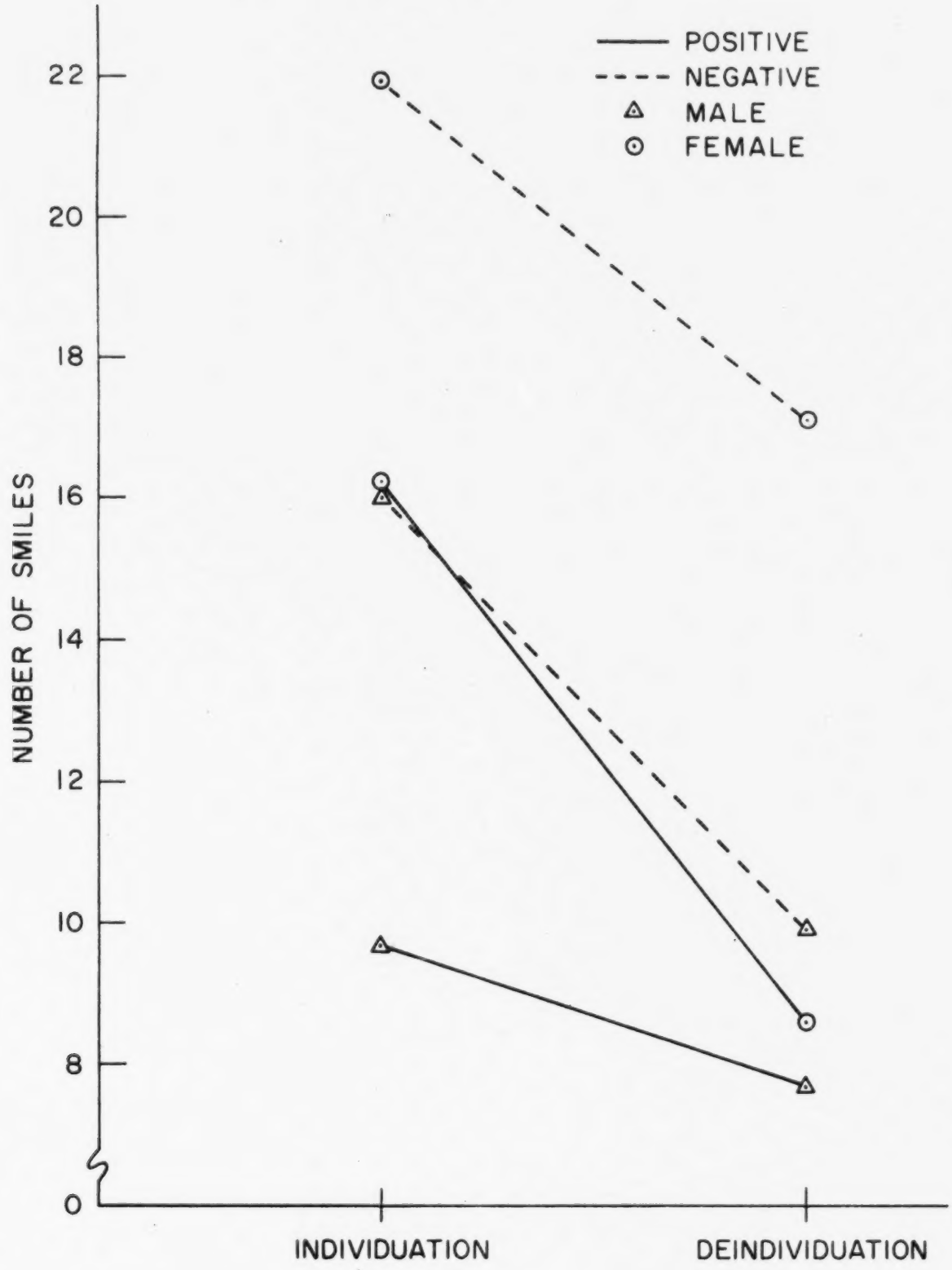
Fig. 1 -- Patterns of individuation as derived from a factor analysis

Fig. 2 -- Patterns of emotional behavior as derived from a factor analysis

Fig. 3 -- Mean number of smiles during discussion


1.00
.80
.60
.40
.20
-.20
-.40
SELF DESCRIPTION – LENGTH
SELF DESCRIPTION – ARM GESTURES
SELF DESCRIPTION – UNUSUAL CONTENT
GROUP CONFORMITY
DISCUSSION – COMMENT LENGTH
DISCUSSION – TOTAL
DISCUSSION – VERBAL ATTENTION GETTING
INDIVIDUATION: SINGULAR
-.40
-.20
.20
.40
.60
.80
1.00
INDIVIDUATION: PERSONAL


.80
DISCUSSION – RELAXED
.60
DISCUSSION – ENJOYABLE
CITY PLANNING GAME – POSITIVE
.40
SOCIAL DESIRABILITY SCORE
DISCUSSION – GESTURES WHILE SILENT
.20
DISCUSSION – VERBAL ATTENTION GETTING
DISCUSSION – COMMENT LENGTH
DISCUSSION – INTERRUPTIONS
DISCUSSION – SMILES
EMOTION: AGITATED
-.60
-.40
-.20
.20
.40
.60
.80
1.00
DISCUSSION – COMMENT NUMBER
SELF DESCRIPTION – LENGTH
-.20
DISCUSSION – JOKES
-.40
EMOTION: CONTENTED


POSITIVE
NEGATIVE
MALE
FEMALE
NUMBER OF SMILES
22
20
18
16
14
12
10
8
0
INDIVIDUATION
DEINDIVIDUATION